

Appl.No.: 10/685,767
Page 9

REMARKS

Interview

The Applicants would like to thank Examiner Reimers and Examiner Robert for their time and input during the interview conducted on March 29, 2006. During the interview, the Applicants proposed certain claim amendments to more clearly define the location of the flexible region in view of the overall device. The Applicants and Examiners Reimers and Robert reached tentative agreement on language that would be acceptable.

The present amendments seek to incorporate the helpful comments received during this interview in order to place the present application in condition for allowance.

Claim Amendments

Claims 1, 2, 12, and 17 are amended to include limitations that better describe the position of the flexible region. Support for these amendments may be found through out the specification and claims as originally filed and can be found at least in FIGS. 3-5 and at paragraphs [0035] and [0038] of the application as published (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0162618).

Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-2, 7, 9, 11-12, 17-19, and 21-25 were rejected under 25 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Suddaby* (U.S. Patent No. 6,332,895). *Suddaby*, however, does not teach, disclose, or suggest all of the limitations of independent claims 1, 2, 12, and 17 as amended.

In the present application, the flexible region is located at the base portion 26 of the internal member 14 and between the attached ends 28*b*, 30*b* of the first and second internal walls 28, 30. As recited in claims 1 and 12, the “a flexible region in the internal member defined by a pair of slots formed adjacent to the attached ends of the first and second internal walls and extending along the length of the internal member base wall, wherein the flexible region provides for lateral displacement of the free ends of the first and second internal walls.” As recited in claim 2, “the internal member includes an arcuate slot positioned adjacent to an attached end of the first wall” so as to permit “flexure of a free end of the first and second walls.” And as recited in claim 17, “arcuate slots positioned adjacent the walls extending along the

Appl.No.: 10/685,767
Reply to Office Action of January 24, 2006
Page 10

length of the second member base wall, the arcuate slots defining a flexible region between each of the walls and the second base portion.”

In contrast, *Suddaby* (U.S. Patent No. 6,332,895) reports a hooked flange 30 that is positioned on the free ends of the internal member 12. The hooked flange 30 does not provide a flexible region as described and claimed. The hooked flange, rather, is at the end of the base wall that flexes and therefore cannot be a “flexible region.”

Furthermore, the slots provided in *Suddaby* are not arcuate slots as recited in claims 2 and 17. Please see FIG 1 of the present application in view of FIG. 1 of *Suddaby*.

For at least these reasons, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection based upon *Suddaby* respectfully requested. In addition, dependent claims 7, 9, 11, 18-19 and 21-25 depend directly or indirectly from one of the independent claims and are therefore allowable for at least these same reasons.

Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 3-6 and 13-15 were rejected as obvious under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) in view of *Suddaby*. Each of these claims is dependent, directly or indirectly, on one or more of the independent claims above and therefore includes each and every limitation of that independent claim. These claims are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons recited above.

AppLNo.: 10/685,767
Reply to Office Action of January 24, 2006
Page 11

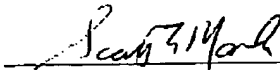
CONCLUSION

In light of the claim amendments and remarks herein, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims are allowable and request entry of this paper and a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney should any questions arise regarding the application.

Respectfully Submitted,

FAEGRE & BENSON LLP

By: 
Scott A. Marks, #44,902
Customer No.: 43541

Dated: April 3, 2006

M2:20786558.01